

Technical Plan



OKANAGAN FC

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Foreword

At the heart of soccer clubs all around the world, at all levels, you can typically find this common ground: a shared desire to influence the level of performance in a positive way. From a U10 match at the local park, to Alphonso Davies in a Champions League final; the players, coaches, and people in supporting roles, are all generally working towards this perpetual target.

It has long since become an accepted good practice for high quality organizations to release a framework which outlines their strategies to meet this challenge head-on... to explain how they plan to improve performance on an individual and team level; this is ours. Within this technical plan, we will attempt to comprehensively (yet not exhaustively) detail our player-building and teambuilding processes and highlight how this process can exist and thrive within Canada Soccer and BC Soccer's systems.

Okanagan FC has our sights set on becoming a cradle-to-grave club, holding standards of excellence across the board with our teams and supplemental programming. We are staunch believers in developing complete and well-rounded soccer athletes, who are skilled players; but also who play the game with courage and integrity, who are strong and resilient both mentally and physically, and most importantly, who are deeply in love with the sport, and who can discover a passion that lasts for a lifetime.

I hope that, through this plan, I am able to adequately express Okanagan FC's values, strategies and intentions.

- Andrew Stevenson
Head Coach & Co-Founder



Playing Philosophy

Holistic Approach

There is no magic formula for success in soccer. Clubs all over the world are tremendously successful despite using having vastly different strategic approaches to delivering results. We believe that the right strategy must be tailored to each organization, and at OFC we have chosen an approach that we believe suits the values and ethos of the club.

We are not blessed to live in an area with deep soccer heritage, rather, it is often an uphill battle to cause infatuation with the sport... therefore, we feel it was important to choose a strategic approach that most enhanced the soccer experience; not only for the players, but for the parents and spectators as well.

To us, the most enjoyable moments in soccer overwhelmingly begin and end with action on the ball, so our philosophy centres around domination of the ball, and the perpetual striving to overload the opponent in attack and to create goalscoring chances.

Another factor in players falling in love with soccer is the comradery and teamwork, so we also emphasize the importance of attacking and defending as a collective.

Defensive Strategy

The matter of most primary importance when talking about the team tactical guidelines to defend is the focus on the collective. Some games will require a lower or higher block, some games will require dealing with longer and shorter passes, but what will not be compromised is the focus on working as a collective. Everyone must also be competent on an individual level and be able to refer to the defensive principles of play.

OFC teams normally play with a high defensive line and look to defend whenever possible in the attacking areas of the pitch, due to this, there is a particular focus on recognizing triggers to either press or to drop and cover the long pass, this creates a high demand on players to communicate and work together to cover the aggressive spaces.

The other key factor in being successful with this defensive outlook is preparing for that transitional moment while in possession. Our hope is to be able to keep and manoeuvre the ball, ourselves, and the opponent in such a way that during transitions, we are well positioned in the opponents half to suffocate their opportunities and leave us well-placed to press the ball and regain the opportunity to attack.

One simple example of this in our approach is our application of *salida lavolpiana* when playing out from defence, we look to advance a defender beyond the attacking players of the opposition team, and replace that player with a midfielder (normally in a more central position). This generally forces a defensive movement from the opponent's attackers and leaves them in a poor position to counterattack in transition.

Where this is unsuccessful, there is the challenging task of teaching players when and where to tactically foul, and what counter attacks are worthy of breaking up and accepting the punishment. While this is a concept that can be sprinkled across the player-building development process, it is certainly best received by players who are already regularly considering and are conscious of their match mentality.

Failing that, teams must of course be competent in operating a low block and defending crosses into the penalty area. During these moments it is important to teach the attacking players how to position themselves to prepare for the opportunity of a counterattack in transition against a high line

Attacking Strategy

To attack in a controlled way, it is imperative to look for moments of superiority in the game. We teach our players to look for 3 kinds of superiority in attack:

- **Qualitative:** whereby we can manufacture a favourable situation due to a difference in quality between attacker and defender.
- **Numerical:** whereby we can create a superiority by numbers, for example, with an overlap situation to create a 2v1.
- **Positional:** whereby we can exert control over the match or create promising situations thanks to a positional advantage. For example, salida lavolpiana in build-up to force negative tracking runs from the opposition forwards, putting them in a non-optimal position to transition, allowing us to more likely build an attack with several phases rather than limiting our possibilities to the initial attacking phase and then being at the mercy of a 50-50 contested ball in transition.

In attack we look to move the ball quickly and attack as a collective. Always striving to create controlled platforms to play between and beyond the opponent's defensive lines.

Owning the Build-up

As with the other elements in our game-model, there is a focus on collectivism and trust of our teammates during the build-up.

Attacking players will need to be well-coached to resist the urge to always support in the direction of the ball. It is imperative that the attacking players are comfortable with taking a position away from the ball in order to stretch the field of play, they must also be patient and willing to wait for their opportunity to be meaningfully involved.

With the ball, our build-up play can be described as the search for the free player who has space to play forward. Our teams are all expected to be able to execute basic collective manoeuvres such as a switch of play or a 3rd man combination to release space and provide an opportunity to attack... while always searching for the option of a penetrating pass or opportunity to drive beyond a line of pressure. We want our players to be brave in possession and look to play positively, but to have the maturity and game insight to simply maintain possession when there is not an obvious opportunity to advance the ball, and also to develop the game insight for when to play safe and prioritize a simple clearance from danger.

One slightly more unique element to OFC's build-up strategy is the role of the central players, we expect our central players to be very mobile and flexible in supporting wide attacks and taking up these positions to help create numerical superiorities in wide areas, they must be willing and able to show effective play on both sides of the field. We are also quite demanding of our striker to regularly come into the midfield and present an option as the free man.

“Everything becomes much easier when the first progression of the ball is clean.”

- Juan Manuel Lillo

Game Model

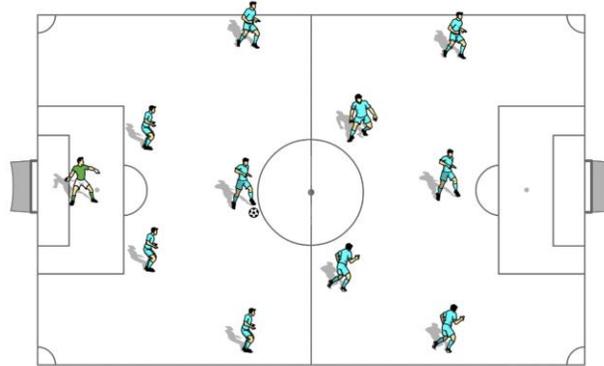
The OFC game model looks to combine the information in our philosophies, with more direct actions as it pertains to specific players and unit within soccer match situations.

- **In Possession:** A set of basic functions to create controlled platforms between the defensive lines, as well as regular coordinated penetrative runs into depth. The structures must also guard against potential transitions.
- **Out of Possession:** The basic movements and priorities of individuals and smaller units within the organized defensive structure.
- **Transitions:** Outlining the team's approach when the ball changes possession
- **Set Pieces:** While more difficult to outline with specific detail, the model will also attempt to outline our approach to the game restarts.

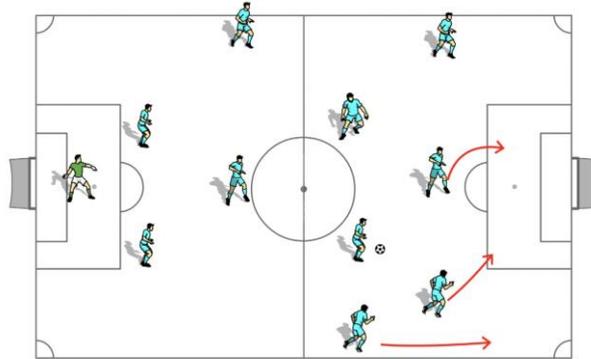
Through a brief review of our philosophies and game model, I hope it gives you an understanding of our vision of the game, and what we are looking to instil in our players and teams.

In Possession

The first step for OFC teams in possessions is to disperse well, effectively using the space of the field (regardless of formation).

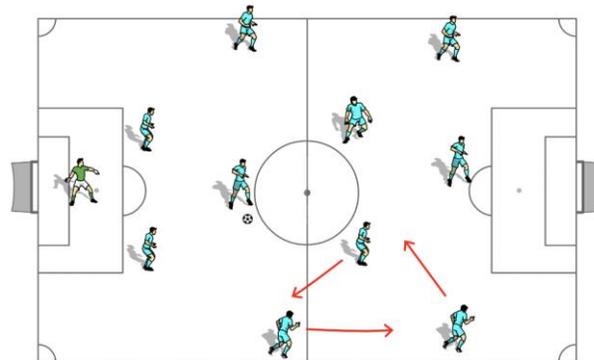


If possession can progress with control, positive runs should be made from supporting players to try and challenge the defensive line. We should especially try to overload the spaces between defenders.



Where it becomes more difficult because of pressure, we want to see controlled rotational movement from players to try and create positive passing opportunities.

As players move forward, it is important to remember that we keep as many defensive players behind the ball as the opponent, so as we don't get counter attacked.



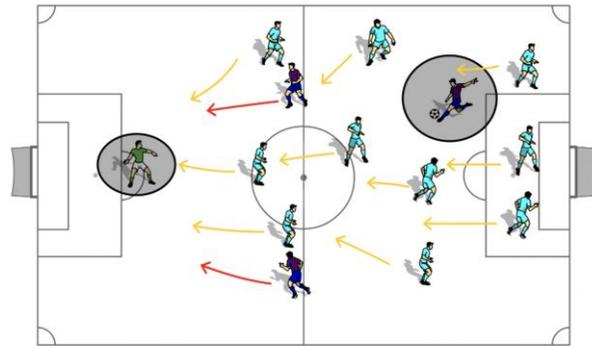
In the final moments of our possession, supporting players should attempt to move into positions to create opportunities for a shot at goal.

Defensive Transition

At OFC, we view transitions as a simple case of risk vs reward. While there is a lot more detail that can be analysed, the basics can be achieved by looking at our approach to “open ball” and “closed ball” situations.

Below is an “open ball”, so when we lose possession, the other team have “open” possibilities. The player with the ball is not pressured and is shaping up to play a long pass forward.

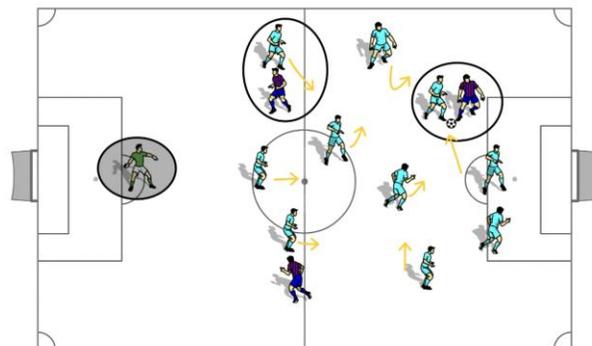
In most transitions like these, our focus is to protect the spaces behind and between our defence. We want our defenders to drop deeper and prioritize being goal-side. If this happens closer to our goal, it will look like the team working to get into positions to block shooting and crossing opportunities, with a focus on the biggest threat to our goal.



In contrast, below this you can see a “closed ball” transition. Where the opponent has won the ball but is immediately challenged by our player before being able to play anything dangerous forward. In this moment, their possibilities are more “closed”

In these situations, we are looking for the supporting players to move aggressively into the passing lanes of the opponent. If we are able to intercept a pass in these moments, we can create an “open ball” transition, which will be a dangerous moment in favour of our team. The players closest to the ball should seek a quick ball recovery.

In both examples, note the fact that we have set-up in possession with enough players back to cover the counter, and also note the position of the keeper during transitions, who will help cover their defenders.



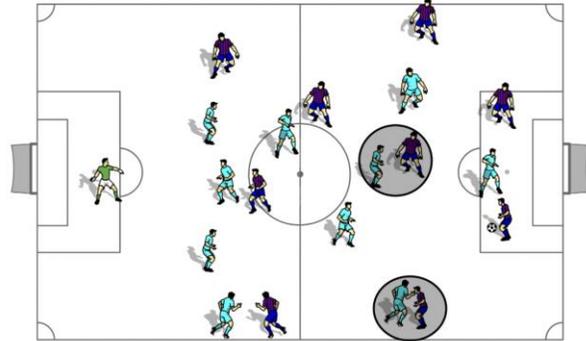
Out of Possession

In these moments, organization is key. A defensive block should be established, with the depth and aggression dependent on the style and quality of the opponent.

As a general rule, we seek to set our defensive blocks as high as possible, while being sure to not expose the spaces in-behind the block. In moments of conflict, prioritize safety in-behind the defensive line.

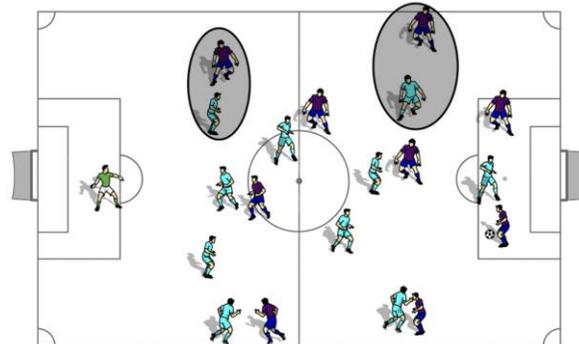
The team should be working to force the opponent to less dangerous areas, and to establish closed-ball situations where we can force a turnover of possession.

The players at the tip of the defensive organization are responsible for establishing pressure and forcing the opponent into predictable patterns of play. Commonly, these players will be instructed to “force play to one side” and to prevent the ball being passed side to side. As highlighted below, the immediate supporting players should look to mark ball-side and goal-side of the immediate passing options. This increases the chances of our team being well-placed to intercept the ball.

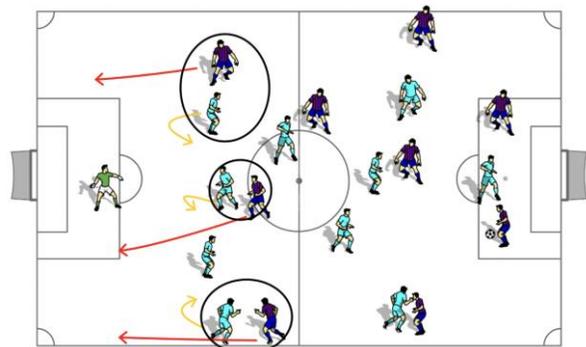


More generally speaking, our team must compact the space. As highlighted below, players on the far side of the pitch can be looser with their marking positions in order to move closer to their teammates and support their defensive position.

In central closed ball positions, these wide players can situationally abandon their mark to overload the immediate ball-position



Players should attempt to track runs in-behind but look to re-join the defensive line when it is safe to do so. The more open the situation for the ball-carrier, the further we must track the run to ensure that the space in-behind is protected.



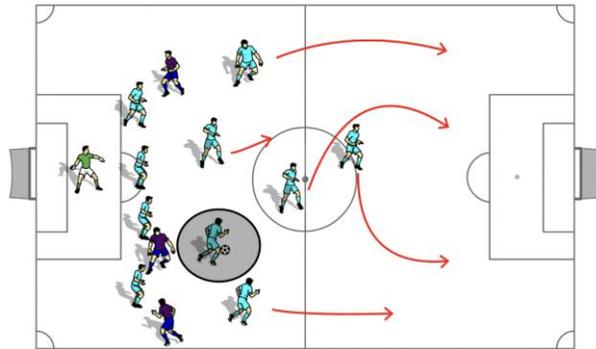
Attacking Transition

At OFC, we view transitions as a simple case of risk vs reward. While there is a lot more detail that can be analysed, the basics can be achieved by looking at our approach to “open ball” and “closed ball” situations.

Below is an “open ball” transition, so when we regain possession, there are many “open” possibilities for the individual or for the team to advance the ball quickly.

In most transitions like these, our focus is to quickly exploit the space afforded to us by the opponent. Supporting runs should be made positively into dangerous areas. The player with the ball should also be ready and willing to drive forward into space.

Exceptions for this can be made in moments where we are prioritizing control over the game rather than scoring another goal, in which case, the player with the ball would look to slow the game down and find a teammate with space, but primarily in these situations we will hope to quickly exploit positive openings.

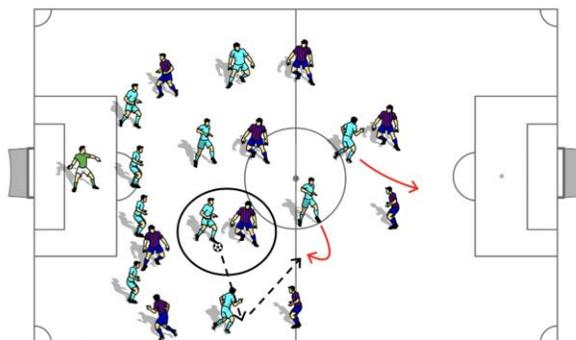


In contrast, below is a “closed ball” transition.

In most transitions like these, our focus is to mitigate risk and to regain control of the ball.

It is excellent and beneficial if we can quickly combine, find a free player, and begin a counterattack... but in closed ball situations this is not a priority. We must manage the situation in such a way to regain the ball if possible, but if not, to successfully prevent the opponent from having a free chance to attack.

In worst-case scenarios, look to play a safe ball out to the wing, or to clear the ball in-behind the opponent’s full-backs.





Set Pieces

Detailing the restart of play, we believe it is important for clubs to have a guideline for set-pieces.

Here is a basic, non-exhaustive guide for most restart situations.

Kickoff and Goal Kicks

In these moments, the team should refer to the principles of play when in possession of the ball.

Free Kick (Shooting)

Players with the ability to score directly should be encouraged to be brave and take appropriate risks in these situations.

At the younger ages, the coach should use the player taking the free kick as a reward for diligent practice and improved ability.

Free Kick (Crossing)

At the younger ages, these should be controlled passing routines or a delivery to a player's foot.

At the older ages, teams may vary their approach to be most effective.

Free Kick (Defending)

The goalkeeper and attackers left forward are responsible for organization of the wall. The centre backs are responsible for the position of the defensive line.

Corner Kicks (Attacking)

At the younger ages (-U13) all corners should be taken short or in a controlled way to arrive at a teammates foot. Encourage quick manufacturing of 1v1 or 2v1 possibilities.

At the older ages, teams may vary their approach to be most effective.

Corner Kicks (Defending)

The OFC model has a small number of players defending the near post zone and a central zone, while the remaining players man-mark, except a small amount left for a counterattack. Specific details will be managed by the team coach.

Okanagan FC do not use players on the post to defend corners, unless it is a late moment in a close win, in which case the attackers left forward would take those roles.

Development Philosophy

The Individual

No matter the topic, it is important to us that it relates back to improving performance on an individual scale. A strong collective must be built on the foundation of strong individuals, so it is crucial to develop the technical skills, game insight, match mentality and athleticism to compete at the highest levels of the game on an individual level.

The Collective

On the flip side of that coin, each improved individual action must be met with the question “how does this improve the quality of the collective?”. Players need to realize that improvement isn’t just about increasing their range of available actions, but also by choosing the correct action to best help the collective in that moment.

Club Culture

If our focus (players, trainers and staff) is all on improving the individual, and especially as their qualities lend to the collective performance... then it is a good start towards fostering a culture of excellence that spans across the entire organization. Which is essential when considering the consistent development of excellent players and groups.

Homework

Throughout the learning process, it is important to assign players tasks to practice and strive to master on their own time. This not only serves to improve their technical skills but is also a great benefit in placing the responsibility for the player’s development onto the player, but also placing some of that responsibility onto the family. Getting the parents involved with at-home practice and learning is invaluable.

Outside Learning

Players in OFC are encouraged and expected to take a keen interest in soccer outside of the club. Players will be regularly engaged in conversation about their favourite team or players, or the latest games being played around the world. We also run classroom lessons over zoom for all of our age groups, which focus on teaching basic game concepts to kids while showing them lots of various video clips from the world of soccer.

Atmosphere

We believe that the atmosphere at an organization is central to development, something often overlooked. We strive to create a positive and energetic environment where kids can feel confident in themselves and feel that they belong. We do not believe that fear is a good tool to use often with young players, and prefer an approach centred around passion and enthusiasm. Creating this kind of atmosphere does wonders for the social and emotional development of the players.

Match Mentality

We always expect players at OFC to play with an intention to win, at the youngest ages, we trust our coaches to value the experience and process over the result (of course!), ,but there is still an expectation for even the youngest kids to play with a desire to win the game. As the players progress into stages 4-5 in LTPD, the desire to win becomes more shared with the coach and staff, although the priority is still with the process and experience rather than the outcome, a focus become giving the players ownership of their preparation and match mentality.

“Football is something like war, whoever behaves too properly, is lost.”

- Rinus Michels



Player Pathway Management

The Individual

While Okanagan FC place a lot of importance on the collective, it is important to remember that player development is actually a practice, in essence, revolving around the individual.

Our organization strives to help players achieve their objectives and optimize their soccer experience. Quite often, this involves navigating through several different programs. Here are many of the most common cases:

OFC Academy

One of the most common ways a player starts on the OFC pathway is through the OFC Academy.

Players on the academy are training either 1x or 2x per week with our professional staff. Each player receives a 'report card' feedback at the end of each training phase. At this stage, all appropriate players are contacted by email about the opportunity for them to trial with an OFC team.

Trials consist of one-week's training with the team, individual team coaches follow-up with them at that point to either offer them a spot, or to create an action plan to help that player try again.

General Progression

This profile of player fits well into their team and is not out-of-place. They will progress through the age-groups with this team. Moving from development (7 or 8 a side) into youth (11 a side) and finally into OFC senior and senior development. These programs are outlined in previous sections.

Moving Up

Some players will excel beyond the level of competition in their current group. Each of these is assessed and handled player-by-player.

Generally, the process will begin with the team coach identifying a talent that is consistently standing-out in their group. Once this player is performing this way internally and externally (against other opponents) we will invite them to train 1x per week with an older or higher-level group if one is appropriate. This will initially replace one of their team sessions.

Based upon the success of integration and which level is a better fit, the player may be moved to 2x per week in place of their old team's sessions. Matches will still be prioritized with their initial team for the first phase of this movement, but occasional game opportunities with the new group may be possible depending on the schedule for the individual.

At this point, the Head Coach and Team Coaches will have a discussion and assess the progress throughout the phase. If there is agreement that the new team is the appropriate level, a more permanent change is made to start the new season.

Moving Down/Out

When there are significant issues with a player, it will be clear to them and their family through the regular feedback received.

Assuming regular motivators don't work, a meeting will be scheduled with the player's family with the team coach to highlight and address these concerns. If continuing, a further meeting will be held with the club Head Coach and the player present as well. The issues will be highlighted as serious, and a timeline to rectify will be established.

After this timeline (usually a month or so) if there is no significant improvement, a final warning will be issued. Finally, a player would be offered a pro-rate



Player Pathway

Active Start + FUNdamentals

Players either start in the OFC Mini/Co-ed program, or in COYSA recreational programming.

Learn to Train

OFC Development teams service this age group, as well as TOYSL locally. OFC expect to gain entry into TOYSL in the near future as part of our integration as full members of BC Soccer.

Train to Train (13-18)

Successful players will graduate into the BCSP, currently with TOFC. OFC hope to soon qualify for entry into the BCSP as a National Youth Club.

Players in this category can also qualify for Provincial Team or Whitecaps Residency opportunities.

Train to Compete (16-21)

Some players may be selected from BCSP for the Whitecaps Residency pathway. Removing these exceptions, successful players will graduate the BCSP onto a U Sports scholarship, as well as participation in OFC or OWFC senior development or senior programming.

Train to Win

Successful players will compete in the OFC senior teams or be selected for opportunities at other high level senior programming, such as CPL/MLS clubs or National Team opportunities.



Train to Compete + Train to Win



Train to Train + Train to Compete



Learn to Train





GAMEPLAY

Format: 4v4

OFC “minis” do not play any games against other organizations. At this stage in their development, their gameplay experiences are confined to training games as part of their regular practices (twice per week). When they do play, there is a qualified coach on the field offering a regular stream of encouragement and simple direction, as teams shoot towards small goals.

OFC MINIS

Active Start (4-6)

THE SOCCER AGE

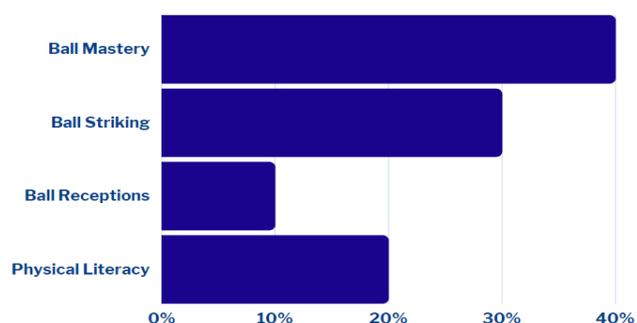
The players on the Okanagan FC “mini” program are just starting out their soccer journey. Through two sessions per week (each one hour long) a passionate and qualified coach leads a small group to taking their first steps towards falling in love with the game.

DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

Players in the “mini” age category are typically in the most self-centred stage of their development, as such, we believe that it is important to focus on improving the quality of individual player actions, with a specific focus on ball mastery. Players at this age also need a lot of individual attention from the coaches during the sessions, as well as simple homework assignments to go home and practice with their parents... at-home practice is essential.

During the sessions, players will be engaged in activities that emphasize practicing basic soccer techniques, while also striving to develop basic physical literacy. Things like obstacle courses and evasive dribbling games are common sights at OFC “mini” practices, usually containing a variety of footwork challenges.

DEVELOPMENT FOCUS





GAMEPLAY

Format: 4v4, 5v5, 6v6, Futsal

OFC Development (stage 1) players still mostly compete in training games as part of their regular practice schedule. Retreat line at the halfway line.

~25 games will be played per year against external opponents, coming from COYSA and neighbouring local districts. This includes a winter futsal "league".

OFC DEVELOPMENT *STAGE 1

FUNdamentals (7-8)

THE SOCCER AGE

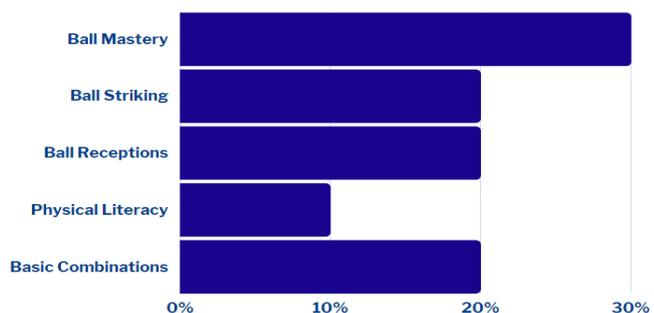
Players who are invited to join the OFC Development Program have started to show a keen interest in the game and are excelling in their training groups. These players are now grouped together in a more focused environment; still with an emphasis on learning the basic forms of soccer in a fun, engaging setting... but now able to feed off of each other's excitement and passion for the game and begin to accelerate the development of their technical skills and physical literacy.

DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

Players in the first stage of the OFC Development Program are moving away from a completely self-focussed mindset and now more readily accept the help of their teammates. They're generally ready to progress from "me" to "me and my friend", as such, a lot of emphasis is placed on how to play with a partner and how to use their support, along with the player's own capacity to perform an individual action to improve the quality of their play.

There is still a keen and primary focus on the development of individual technique and skill, but from day 1, we want to instil a key value of OFC into the players... teamwork. A simple message of "side before self, every time.", borrowed from our beloved Leeds United, Billy Bremner's words perfectly encapsulate the spirit and comradery we want to affect in our players and teams.

DEVELOPMENT FOCUS





GAMEPLAY

Format: 4v4, 5v5, 6v6, 7v7, 8v8, Futsal

OFC Development (stage 2) teams will play ~40-50 small-sided games per year. Retreat line at the 1/3 of the pitch.

Matches are exhibitions against neighbouring district sides, and a variety of sanctioned tournament play. We hope to soon compete in TOYSL.

OFC DEVELOPMENT *STAGE 2

Learn to Train (9-12)

THE SOCCER AGE

By the time players reach stage 2 of the OFC Development Program, they demonstrate basic competency with ball mastery and possess the ability to consistently pass the ball across controlled distances. They are now ready for the first real ingredients of the teambuilding process.

These kids are already in love with the game of soccer or well on their way towards being so. While encouraged with regular homework assignments, at-home practice needs to be regular and expected.

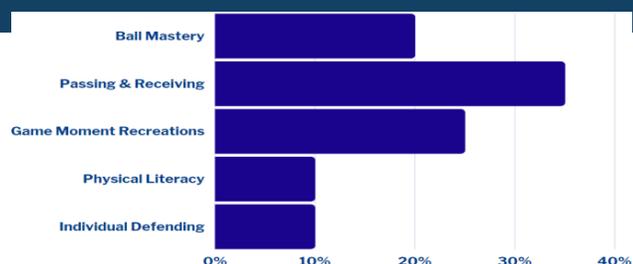
DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

The basic function of the OFC Development program is to develop players capable of applying their skills competently in the 11 v 11 game. The small-sided game, along with various training exercises, must strive to recreate realistic game moments and situations. Basic ingredients from the 4 v 4 and 7 v 7 formats need to translate well into the full match.

By playing through these smaller, simplified game moments, players can begin combining their technical skill with newly developing game insight, to positively impact their and their team's performance. This is a big step, not only individually, but also in the broader teambuilding process.

It is also crucial during these years, as the players become accustomed to playing other clubs, that they learn the importance of playing the game with courage and integrity, and to represent themselves with pride and by showing respect.

DEVELOPMENT FOCUS





OFC YOUTH

Train to Train + Train to Compete

THE SOCCER AGE

It is our hope for OFC Youth Teams to compete in the BCSPL.

OFC Youth players have generally already had several years in the OFC Development Program and are well-placed to transition their play to the final 11v11 form. The teambuilding process is well underway and matches commonly feature basic team tactical concepts (for example, overlaps, switches of play or the organization of defensive blocks).

At this age, players must enjoy freedom to make individual actions within the 11v11 structure but understand the importance of the broad team tactical guidelines. At this age, the primary focus of the teambuilding process is on attacking and defending as a collective.

GAMEPLAY

Format: 4v4, 7v7, 8v8, 11v11, Futsal

Now primarily 11v11, teams begin to compete in more structured competitive play, either competing for tournaments or what we hope is inclusion into the BCSPL.

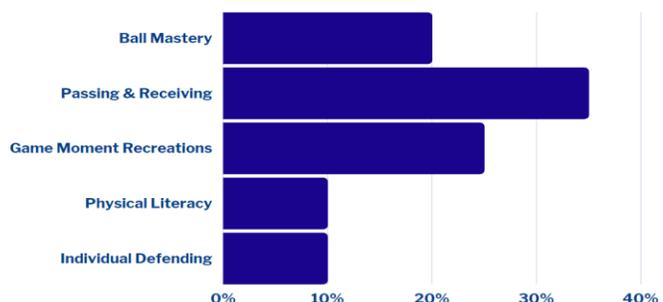
OFC Youth teams play ~40 matches per year.

DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

As long as individual development still takes priority, even though the focus is more and more about the cooperation with other players, each individual must still possess the right to “do what they want” with the ball in game moments... the pressure to change these actions should not come from the coach’s direction, but rather pressure exerted from the ever-increasing importance of their role within the team. As match situations increase in relative perceived importance, and the demands of the individual within the team structure also increases, so do the pressures on the individual to sacrifice the freedom of their individual actions to contribute to the team’s collective success.

At this age, there must also be a focus on developing a strong “match mentality”, the players must show more intention to win as they get older and also the development of healthy match preparation and recovery habits.

DEVELOPMENT FOCUS





OFC SENIOR DEVELOPMENT

Train to Compete (16-21)

THE SOCCER AGE

Players who excel or graduate from OFC Youth teams or exceptional graduating players from local youth clubs are identified to continue their player development in a preparatory program for the senior competitive game.

Players will also be mandated to complete their fundamentals and learn to train coaching badges. The OFC Head Coach will be ultimately responsible for this implementation.

With the appointment of Carli Tingstad (who is a qualified learning facilitator), we hope to be able to deliver our own coaching courses for these players in the near future.

GAMEPLAY

Format: 7v7, 8v8, 11v11 Futsal

OFC Senior Development currently compete in the PCSL, A competitive inter-city league. This was an objective of the club in our 2019 technical plan, and we are happy to now have this group competing at the PCSL level.

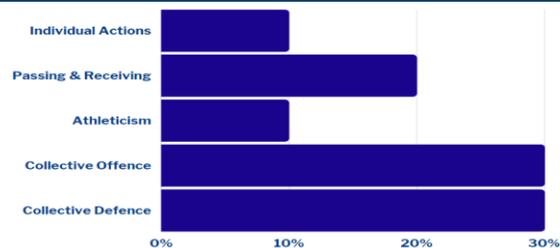
The team also regularly train in inter-squad situations with the OFC Premier teams,

DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

The primary focus of this age category is the development of match maturity. By the end of this development process, the result will be the most important reference by which to measure success – thus, it becomes crucial to build upon the match mentality cultivated in the youth years and sculpt a winning mentality, or even a draw mentality depending on the situation. The players must begin to understand that contextually, the result can sometimes become prioritized over the match process.

Another concept that is readily introduced is adaptation to specific opponents, as well as the specific team tactical instructions that accompany these adaptations. Players must be flexible, and capable of performing well in many different interpretations of positional play. Speed of action also becomes much more important.

DEVELOPMENT FOCUS





OFC PREMIER

Train to Win (adult)

THE SOCCER AGE

The OFC Premier team is a competitive program that competes in the top level of adult competition that is realistically accessible.

At this level, players need to demonstrate the top level of soccer maturity. The objective is to win matches, challenge for trophies, and draw/excite a passionate crowd. Players must be mentally resilient to cope with these challenges, and technically/physically proficient to be effective at a high level.

Our hope is for the OFC Premier team to eventually compete in L1BC or similar project. There are no fees to play in our Premier program and we are working towards being truly semi-professional in the long term.

GAMEPLAY

Format: 7v7, 8v8, 11v11 Futsal

OFC Premier are currently preparing for a hopeful 2021 exhibition series alongside some of the top amateur clubs in Western Canada.

Appropriate players from the group will also be recruited to complete their coaching courses. OFC head coach will be responsible for the recruitment, as well as guiding them through our coach development process (outlined on p.24-25).

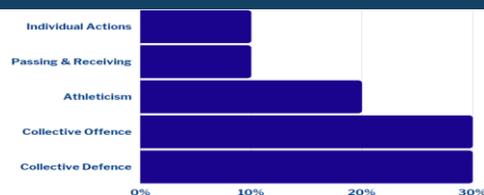
DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

There are two main types of player in this programming... the young player who has ambitions to advance out of OFC, and the senior player who wants to optimize their adult playing career at OFC. It is important that the coaching staff consider the motivations of both and use those driving factors to impact positively on the performance level of the group, which should translate to positive results.

Senior players can be trusted with a lot of responsibility to the collective, acting as a glue to the teambuilding process, these players have achieved a consistent level of performance that can be trusted at the playing level.

When dealing with certain younger players with ambition, it is important to shape their individual actions that can thrive in any playing system, to prepare them to be successful outside of OFC. It is our hope that these players are able to earn a contract in the CPL or elsewhere, and we are already prepared to lose them after a few seasons.

DEVELOPMENT FOCUS





Sport Medicine & Science Plan

Okanagan FC have a close working partnership with Kinetic Evolution to provide athletic therapy and training services.

Physical Training

Okanagan FC players in-season do on-field physical training with Kinetic Evolution staff. A physical trainer will lead a time-appropriate portion of a weekly training session and lead the group through an age-appropriate warm-up, workout and cool-down based on the timing of these activities.

The physical trainers work closely with the team coaches and provide guidance on leading warm-ups and cool-downs, as well as athletic best-practices for sessions where it isn't possible to have a physical trainer present.

Off-season, players will train in Kinetic Evolution's facility weekly as a team, with further individual and small-group sessions also offered. Homework exercises will be assigned alongside instructional videos.

Coach: Player ratio does not exceed 1:8, and sessions are focussed on the core tenants of soccer-specific athleticism: speed, strength, agility, endurance, flexibility and balance.

Timelines

In-season activity (on-field) will take place between March-October, off-season activity (in-gym) will take place between November-February.

Development-stage players will receive 30 minutes of on-field physical training, focussed on improving basic physical literacy, footwork and coordination. Good warm-up practices will be instilled from this early age under the direction of the physical trainer, but mostly implemented by the team coach.

Youth-stage players will receive 60 minutes of physical training per week, and have their warm-ups led by the trainer for 2 of their 3 weekly sessions. The trainer will look to establish strong movement patterns that can be optimized for maximum power generation and stability. Good cool-down practices are emphasized, and the trainer works closely in conjunction with the team coach for quality-control.

In the BCSPL, our desired state would be to have a physical trainer at every session guiding the athletic development of the players.

Data Collection

Players will undergo physical testing at the start and end of each playing season. Kinetic Evolution will be responsible for the acquisition of this information and uploading it to the players' Pro Soccer Data profile. Through this program, players & parents will be able to look at their performance metrics, as well as comparing it to benchmarks within the club and other recognized standards of excellence in soccer.

Learning Objectives

Through Pro Soccer Data, our trainers will be able to set goals and objectives for players (KPIs). Players will then have actionable targets they either need to strive to hit at the next round of testing, or for some objectives they will need to find examples of understanding from their video library available through Veo.

Kinetic Evolution trainers will make these objectives as soccer specific as possible, so as the player can always relate their athletic development to their soccer development. This is crucial.



Sport Medicine & Science Plan

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COVID

We are excited to be resuming physical training in an on-field capacity in compliance with the latest COVID guidelines. Establishing good practices such as:

- Fewer athletes at sessions
- Socially distanced training
- Staggered group arrival

Amongst other procedures that create a safe training environment for the players even in difficult times.

Building a Better Soccer Athlete

Even when all training was suspended, Kinetic Evolution worked with us to produce a video series entitled “Building a Better Soccer Athlete”. These videos focussed on at-home exercises and workouts that players can do to improve their physicality and also to become more injury resilient.

We have now paired these videos with technical homework, and classroom sessions.

Injury Protocol

Category 1

Injury is mild and should recover in a short span of time. Players may return to play at their discretion but should be monitored for at least as week upon return. Players may be assigned at-home strengthening exercises.

Category 2

Injury is moderate and will prevent play for multiple weeks. Injury and treatment must be recorded on Pro Soccer Data. Ideally, players will book and receive clearance from Kinetic Evolution before return to training. Must be monitored for at least a week of successful sessions before returning to competition.

Category 3

These injuries are more severe and will prevent play for up to a month or longer. Injury and treatment must be recorded on Pro Soccer Data. Clearance from Kinetic Evolution must be given before player may return to train, follow-up clearance from them must be provided before return to competition.

Concussion

When a player sustains a head injury and displays any concussion symptoms, they must be prevented from returning to play until cleared by a medical doctor.

As part of our strategic plan, OFC plans to have concussion baseline testing done for all players in 2022.

Jeff Staheli, lead therapist and owner at Kinetic Evolution, is responsible for coordinating the treatment of OFC athletes and communicating with the relevant OFC staff (primarily the Head Coach).

Wellness Checks

Mental health is often overlooked. Through Pro Soccer Data, players will have a wellness questionnaire each morning to check in on their well-being. Questions such as quality/duration of sleep, current mood, energy levels etc will all be regularly asked. This will provide an invaluable tool for players to self-report their condition, and to provide excellent insights for their coaches.



Sport Medicine & Science Plan

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Anti-Doping

Okanagan FC strongly oppose the use, possession and supply of banned substances and practices in competitive sport by its players, coaches, staff or anybody else associated with the club or the competitions/associations we belong to.

As such, Okanagan FC adopt the principles of the Canadian Anti-Doping Program (CADP) run by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sports (CCES). They provide a set of rules and guidelines with respect to the use of prohibited substances and methods in sport that serve to protect the integrity of that sport and the right to clean athletic competition.

Treatment Options

Kinetic Evolution offer a wide range of treatment options, including but not limited to:

- Physiotherapy
- Massage Therapy
- Sports Chiropractic
- Acupuncture

After an initial assessment, Kinetic Evolution will coordinate with the player, their family and the OFC coaching staff to decide on the best course of rehabilitation for the player.

Recovery

As our physical training and treatment are from the same provider, a player's rehabilitation program will often include a training/strengthening element. Players can be gradually re-introduced to intense actions under the close watch of their trainer and athletic therapist.

Prevention

Our physical trainers will often be out on the field with teams leading them through their warm-ups and strengthening exercises. When this isn't possible, the physical trainers will have worked closely with OFC team coaches to establish best athletic practices for warm-ups and cool-downs.

Data Collection

Players treated for an injury will have this process detailed on their Pro Soccer Data profile. This injury history will be invaluable when identifying chronic problems or for assessing risk. It will also provide useful when putting together recruitment packages for players looking for further opportunities at high levels of competitive soccer.



Technology Plan

Effectively utilizing technology is essential in the successful development of the modern footballer. Okanagan FC are excited to be stepping up our game in this area with some exciting new initiatives. OFC Head Coach is currently responsible for implementation of technology.

Pro Soccer Data & Veo

Every Okanagan FC player will have an account with Pro Soccer Data moving forwards. This will allow us to organize:

- Administration/payments
- Schedule (team and individual)
- Access to video
- Learning objectives / KPIs
- Feedback / Observations
- Wellness checks
- Performance Data
- Injury history

Our target moving forward is to manage our athlete's Pro Soccer Data profiles to help optimize their development.

In conjunction, OFC will be filming training and games using unmanned Veo cameras. Full footage and condensed clips will be readily available to all players.

Video Analysis

Through Pro Soccer Data and Veo, players will have access to their video footage from training and matches.

Coaches will task their players with homework objectives which will consist of two main methods:

- Coach will provide an objective for the player to achieve or demonstrate understanding of. Player will need to review their video and find an example of a clip where they achieve or demonstrate understanding of the learning objective.
- Coach will provide a condensed, topical video clip alongside a simple questionnaire. The player will be asked to review the video and answer the questionnaire.

This process will also be used for coach development, where the team coach assumes the role of the player, and the OFC Head Coach assumes the role of coach.

Performance Data

Through our work with Kinetic Evolution and physical training/testing, we will be collecting a lot of data on individual players. These data-points will be uploaded onto each player's profile to detail their performance history and current capabilities. The trainers will also establish benchmarks for the players to reach that align with high levels of age-appropriate competition.

Examples of these are: 10m acceleration, 40m acceleration, arrowhead sprints etc.

Injury History & Return to Play Protocol

Pro Soccer Data will also keep a log and visual display of all current and healed injuries. Players will be expected to update their display when an injury forces 1+ weeks of sessions to be missed. In these cases, we must also see that the player has added a comment with the appropriate treatment.

In ideal cases, players will go to Kinetic Evolution for treatment, where the head of our medical team can input the injury and treatment details. In these cases, we will actually get an email prompt when the player is cleared to safely return to action.



Coach Development

Recruitment

Okanagan FC Head Coach Andrew Stevenson is responsible for coach recruitment and development.

Our coaches generally come from four streams: OFC players, OFC parents, former competitive players and people who have just moved to the area.

For any new coach, the first step is a face-to-face meeting with our head coach. Our aim is to establish the candidate's motives, objectives, availability and competency. If we feel that the person fits the profile for an OFC coach, they will then proceed into our coach development process.

If the candidate is the right profile, they will also need to complete a CRC before partaking in any sessions.

Initial Development

Once a potential addition to the coaching team is identified, they will begin by shadowing sessions with an experienced OFC member of staff. This presents an opportunity for the candidate to experience our methodology more personally and offers mentoring opportunities for the senior member of staff.

If the shadowing goes well, the candidate will proceed to run a small part of the session with the senior staff member now doing the shadowing. At first, the new coach will receive a lot of guidance in real-time. As competency is established, this real-time guidance will transition more towards observation/feedback, and the new coach will take the lead with more of the session, more often. This will be timed in conjunction with the candidate working towards the appropriate qualification, which will be paid for and supported by OFC.

Before being named as a group coach, each new hire will undergo an assessment session completed by the club head coach. The coach will receive detailed written feedback on their performance, referencing their organization, rapport, and several other aspects regarding the quality of the session.

If acceptable for that level and appropriately qualified, the candidate will now be announced as a new member of staff. If acceptable quality but still working towards the appropriate qualification, the coach will usually be named as an assistant until qualifications are achieved.

Ongoing Development

All Okanagan FC coaches will be setup with a profile on Pro Soccer Data. This will help with the following development methods which will be ongoing for all coaches, see the next page for more specifics:

- Clipped videos from sessions outlining key moments and offering feedback.
- Establish individual objectives and KPIs, for example: can you try to work towards smoother transitions between your activities?
- Establish group objectives and KPIs for their teams, for example: can you impact the players to force the ball wide when pressing?
- Regular observed sessions, at least two per month. Self-evaluation and feedback from OFC Head Coach through this process will guide development. All sessions will be filed.
- Once per month at minimum, all OFC coaches will meet for the purposes of collaboration and coach development.

Coach Development – Ongoing Development

Video Examples

We will be using Veo to record all of our sessions and using Pro Soccer Data we will upload short clips from sessions to each coach's account attached with some feedback that relates to their coaching development. Each coach will receive "feedback clips" weekly from the OFC head coach.

Establishing KPIs

OFC Head Coach will establish KPI objectives with each of the coaching team. These will be logged on Pro Soccer Data, using the video clips from the sessions, coaches will need to upload short video examples of them achieving their KPIs (bi-monthly timeline). Examples of possible KPIs:

- Widen the range of players affected by your coaching, look around and away from the ball.
- Spend less time on stoppages between activities.
- Position yourself to best affect the part of the team your session is focussed on.

We will also establish "group KPIs" which will be objectives for them to complete with their teams. They will work in the same way, where the coach must find a short clip to match the KPI, but this time it is of the team's performance, not the individual's coaching. This is to ensure that the coach's team is working to the YTP. Examples could include:

- Show an example of your team performing an overlap to create a crossing opportunity.
- Show an example of midfield rotation to create space.
- Show an example of your team reacting appropriately to a pressing trigger.

Observed Sessions

Bi-weekly, the OFC head coach will observe sessions for each coach and complete a formal feedback process.

- Self-evaluation: the coach will be expected to reflect on the session and offer their thoughts via a questionnaire.
- Guided feedback: OFC head coach will provide a feedback form which addresses the key areas from the session.
- Discussion: OFC head coach will follow-up with the coach for a discussion to reflect on the session, and if necessary, to instil actionable improvements via KPIs

Observed sessions will be recorded and filed. At the end of each playing phase, each coach will have a review meeting with the OFC head coach for a progress check which will include a broader review of the phase's observed sessions.

Coaching Support

Monthly, all OFC coaches meet to discuss topics relating to player development at the club. This will provide a forum for coaches to have a voice, as well as an opportunity for the head coach to provide general guidance and direction to the coaching staff. Collaboration is also highly encouraged.

At each support meeting, it is also reinforced that OFC will support any pursuit of a relevant qualification. OFC will pay for applicable coaching courses, offer guidance throughout, and cover any forced absences. The head coach is responsible for all matters pertaining to coaching qualifications.



Female Development

Overview

Okanagan FC are striving to be leaders in the development of the female game in Canada. Our objective is to operate a full set of excellent development and youth teams, and for our adult women's side to be competitive with the top clubs in western Canada.

Our Head Coach is ultimately responsible for our strategic plan to bolster female representation at OFC.

First Steps

In the past little while, OFC have taken many positive steps towards building our female programming:

- 5 new female teams since 2018.
- Formation of a women's premier team.
- Formation of women's senior development program.
- Hired a top-quality female coach who is also a learning facilitator.
- Began process of identifying potential mentees for future positions.

Specific Timeline

March 2021 – Senior Development Program formed
March 2021 – Women's Premier Team formed
March 2021 – Carli Tingstad joins coaching team

April/May 2021 – Carli Tingstad identifies two potential mentees and future female additions to coaching staff. They will follow our coach recruitment/development process, with Carli as the senior member of staff providing mentorship.

Spring/Summer 2021 – Hopefully achieve National Youth Club License. Future access to BC SPL.

Summer 2021 – Expand Senior Development program to adequately service the wide range of ages.

Summer 2021 – Hopefully compete in first ever women's premier soft-season. Engage our girls in watching local women's soccer and attempt to drum-up community excitement.

Fall 2021 – Expand two new female development teams, graduate female coaching mentees into lead coaching roles for these groups while they progress their qualifications. Begin search for next two mentees. Repeat previous process

Summer/Fall 2022 – Target of 5 players graduated from Senior Development Program into the Women's premier. Target of 5 qualified female coaches on OFC staff leading groups.

Mentorship & Referee Development

Girls who are experienced in our programs will often be invited to help with a younger group at the club in a mentorship capacity.

In these 'junior assistant' roles, players will be put into soft-mentorship situations with younger players, that can provide excellent responsibilities for the older players and provide excellent role models for the younger kids.

We have also made contact with the local referee scheduler and intend to help promote the development of young referees. Promoting these courses to all of our young players will only solidify the state of soccer in the region, we will often use our own kids as "referees" for younger teams' training matches.